

Walhalla State Fish Hatchery is a key component of the SCDNR's Freshwater Fisheries Management program. Combined with regional biological survey offices, state public fishing lakes and six other hatcheries, the SCDNR is providing South Carolina's citizens and visitors with the best recreational fishing opportunity possible while protecting and conserving our aquatic resources.

State Fish Hatcheries



1 Walhalla
198 Fish Hatchery Rd
Hwy 107N
Mt. Rest, SC 29664
864-638-2866

2 Glenmore Shirey
169 Fish Hatchery Rd
Newberry, SC 29108
803-276-2378

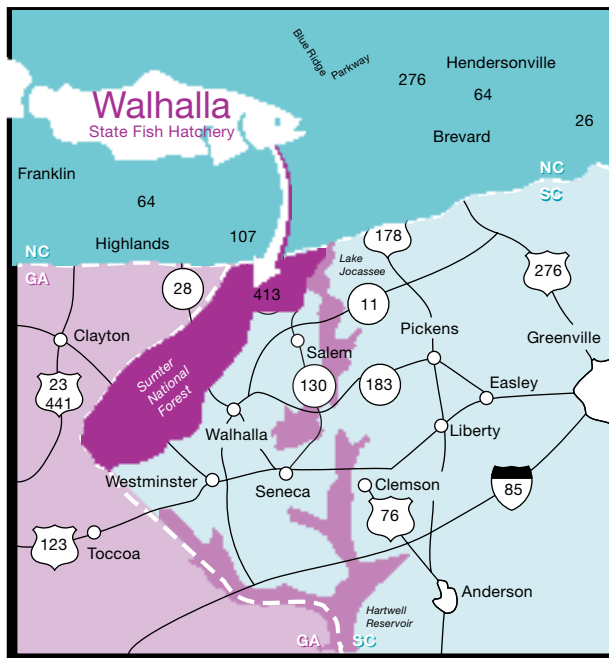
3 Spring Stevens
5290 Fish Hatchery Rd
Heath Springs, SC 29058
803-273-3306

4 Cheraw
Rt. 2, Box 620
Cheraw, SC 29250
843-537-7628

5 Campbell
1522 Fish Hatchery Rd.
West Columbia, SC 29169
803-755-2070

6 Barnwell
10121 Dunbarton Blvd.
Barnwell, SC 29812
803-259-5053

7 Dennis Wildlife Center
PO Drawer 190
Bonneau, SC 29431
843-825-3387



Hatchery Personnel

Brian Wisner, Hatchery Manager
Bob Lowery, Robby Lowery, Shane Gibbs

For Additional Information, Contact: Hatchery Manager, Walhalla State Fish Hatchery, 198 Fish Hatchery Rd. Mountain Rest, SC 29664
Phone: (864)638-2866



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Walhalla



South Carolina
State Fish Hatchery

elcome and Enjoy Your Visit

We hope you have an informative and enjoyable visit. Please feel free to call upon our employees to answer questions.

What We Do



Operated by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), this fish hatchery is one of seven in South Carolina serving a vital role in the management of our state's fishery resources. The Walhalla State Fish Hatchery is unique in that it is the only state hatchery involved in the culture of trout, a cold-water species. Trout are produced here in support of recreational fishing. When they reach an appropriate size, the trout are stocked wherever suitable coldwater habitat occurs in South Carolina.

The streams of the Appalachian Mountains are generally pristine and of good water quality. However, they are frequently not very fertile and are not as productive as streams in other areas of the country. This is due to the type of bedrock from where they originate which produces low alkalinity in the water. Therefore, streams in South Carolina do not typically support high fish populations on their own. This fact, combined with heavy fishing pressure, creates the need for supplemental stocking with trout from the hatchery to sustain a viable fishery.

Other hatcheries operated by SCDNR produces a variety of fish species more suited to warmer waters. These would include largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, blue catfish, bream, striped bass and hybrid striped bass.

Beginnings

Construction of the Walhalla hatchery began in the mid 1930's. The first trout released from here occurred about 1937. The stone hatchery building, the wood frame garage/workshop, and the hatchery quarters were built by the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps. The original rearing tanks were small circular pools. The present raceways and newer buildings were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's, with the exception of the public restrooms, which were completed in 1994. The oxygen supplementation system was added in 1990 to increase production.

Originally, the hatchery was operated by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries, Department of Commerce. It was next under the direction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior. In January, 1996, supervision of this hatchery was transferred to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

What Can You Do?

Visitors are welcome to tour the hatchery, to fish in the East Fork which runs through hatchery grounds, or to picnic in areas provided for the public.

Special group tours can be arranged by calling the hatchery. Group tours would include scouting groups, church groups, schools, or other organizations. Visits by individuals and families are generally on a walk-through basis. Please feel free to ask our hatchery employees any questions that you may have. The best time of year to schedule group tours is in the fall. At this time, you will be able to see more stages in the life cycle of trout, particularly the eggs and sac fry. It may be possible to schedule a time during the spawning of brood fish.

Hatchery Hours

Generally, hatchery hours are from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM daily. There may be a few exceptions during the winter months if inclement weather makes conditions unsafe for visitation. The hatchery is closed Christmas Day.

Area Interests and Activities

Adjacent to the hatchery is the Chattooga Picnic Area, operated by the U.S. Forest Service. In the vicinity of the picnic area can be found some towering white pines and hemlocks.

Also in the picnic areas is a barrier-free fishing pier. This structure is on the bank of the East Fork, Chattooga River and is accessible from the parking lot.

Adjacent to the picnic area is the boundary of the Ellicott Rock Wilderness. Hikers may take a trail that goes along side the East Fork for 2.5 miles to the main Chattooga River. From there you can go upstream to Ellicott's Rock (1.7 miles) or downstream to the Burrell's Ford campground and parking lot (2.1 miles). A copy of a small map for this trail is available in the office upon request.

On Highway 107 South towards Walhalla is the Oconee State Park. Here there are cabins, camping areas, swimming, and numerous other recreational activities.

Take Highway 107 north and follow signs to the nearby Lake Jocassee overlook and the Whitewater Falls. Both provide spectacular scenery, particularly during the autumn leaf season.

Walhalla Fish Hatchery

1. HATCHERY BUILDING

The fish growing cycle begins here. One section of this building is the incubator room where trout eggs are hatched in special jars or trays. Due to the ease with which these eggs can be damaged, the incubator room is normally not open to the public. The main section of the hatchery building has 12 concrete tanks where the young trout are started on feed and grown to about 2 inches before being moved outside.

Handicap parking is available in front of this building for hatchery visitors.

2. OUTSIDE RACEWAYS

Trout continue to grow in these tanks, or raceways, until ready for stocking. Each tank is about 100 feet long. If rainfall is at normal levels, the flow of water through each raceway series is about 600 gallons per minute.

3. FEED STORAGE BUILDING

Hatchery personnel only.

4. RACEWAY COVER

Trout broodstock are kept under this cover. When the eggs are taken, they must be protected from harmful rays in the sunlight. The eggs are taken from the broodstock in this raceway and then placed in special trays in the hatchery building to incubate.

5. OFFICES

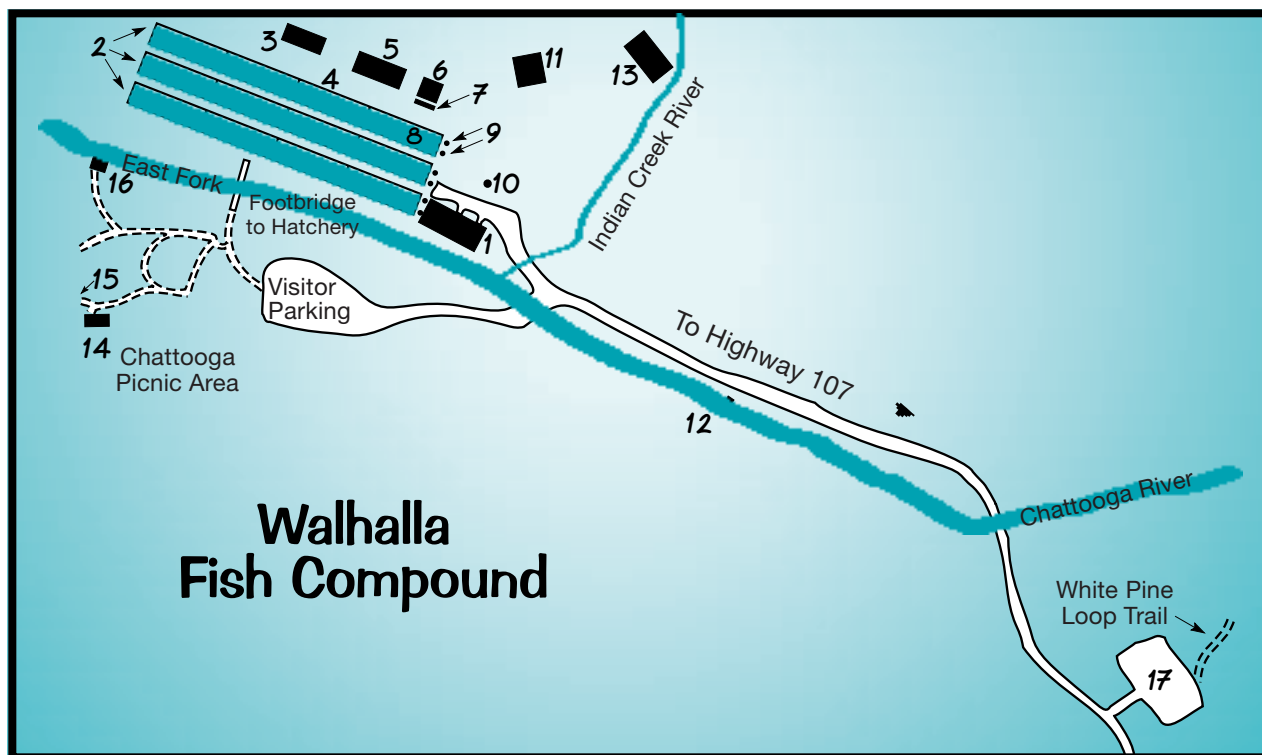
If you have questions, or need assistance, please contact any hatchery worker you see or come to the office.

6. PUBLIC RESTROOMS

A drinking fountain is available at the front of the building.

7. KIOSK

Interpretive displays about the hatchery as well as information about other activities in this area are presented.



8. DISPLAY TROUT

Some large rainbow and brown trout are located in the lower part of this raceway. These fish are kept strictly for the viewing enjoyment of our visitors. They are not released into streams.

9. AERATION COLUMNS

These columns add oxygen to the water. Extra oxygen helps us raise the numbers of fish required for our stocking needs.

10. OXYGEN TANK

This large storage tank contains liquid oxygen that is converted to gaseous form before being added to the water in the aeration columns.

11. PRIVATE RESIDENCE

Not open to the public.

12. WATER INTAKE STRUCTURES

Water that the hatchery uses for growing fish

comes from Indian Camp Creek and from the East Fork of the Chattooga River. The dam on the East Fork is where water enters a main supply pipe, which can be seen along the river bank coming to the hatchery.

13. GARAGE/WORKSHOP

Hatchery personnel only.

14. PICNIC PAVILION

Available first-come, first-serve.

15. TRAIL HEAD

Access to East Fork hiking trail.

16. FISHING PIER

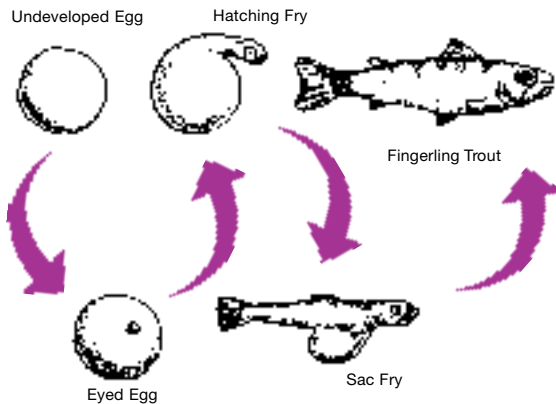
This barrier-free pier is on the East Fork which is open to public fishing.

17. PARKING LOT

For anglers and access to 1/2 mile White Pine loop trail.

LIFE-CYCLE of Rainbow Trout

Egg to Fingerling



Natural Life

Trout eggs are deposited in prepared redds, or nests in the gravel of stream beds and hatch in 4 weeks or more. A young fish or fry lives for 3 to 4 weeks on food absorbed from the yolk sac. Once the yolk is absorbed, the fry emerges from the gravel and feeds on microscopic aquatic organisms. From the many eggs deposited in the gravel, only a few fish survive to adulthood. Most of the eggs and young die from natural causes such as floods, silt, drought or predators. Under natural conditions, relatively few trout reach a catchable size to be taken by fishermen.

Trout Stocking

Three species of trout are raised at the Walhalla State Fish Hatchery - Rainbow ,

Brook and Brown trout. Most of these fish are stocked at a catchable size into streams of South Carolina. The state has limited numbers of streams cold enough to support trout on a year-round basis. Suitable coldwater streams are generally restricted to higher elevations in Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee counties. Please visit our kiosk (Item Number 7 above) for a list and map of streams that are stocked with fingerlings or with catchable size trout. Most of these fish are stocked by truck at a 9 inch size - about 200,000 annually. A smaller number - about 30,000 - are stocked at a 12 inch size or larger. Some of the smaller streams are stocked only with 3 to 5 inch fingerlings. Also, the more remote sections of the Chattooga River are stocked by helicopter with 25,000 five inch fingerlings. Trout stocked at these smaller sizes convert to natural food for continued growth.

The stocking season typically begins in mid-February and goes through mid-November. During July and August some of the lower elevation streams are not stocked because water temperatures get to high.

Trout Culture

Trout broodstock (parent fish) are maintained at the hatchery and the eggs are taken manually when the fish become "ripe" in October or November. The eggs taken from the females are fertilized with milt (sperm) from the males. The eggs are then placed in special incubators where they receive a continuous supply of oxygen-rich water. At the early stage, the eggs are very tender and cannot be handled. Total incubation time, from spawning to hatch,

is normally 4 to 6 weeks.

About half way through the incubation period, the eyes of the developing embryo can be clearly seen through the transparent shell. This is called the "eyed" stage. At this time they can be handled and transported without harm to the fish.

After hatching, the small fry have their own food supply in the form of a yolk sac which is still attached and clearly visible. This is the young fish's only food source for the first two or three weeks of life. The yolk sac is gradually absorbed and the fish are then ready to begin feeding.

The trout are fed a commercially prepared food that is granular in size for the small fish while different size pellets are given to the larger fish. This food is high in protein and other nutrients and provides a complete diet.



The small trout are kept inside the hatchery building until they reach about 2 inches in length. They are then moved to the outside raceways for continued growth. It takes 14 to 16 months for the fish to reach the stocking size of 9 inches.

We enjoyed having you visit the hatchery and invite you to return often. Your awareness of our resource and its needs is the basic foundation for support of healthy fish and wildlife populations.

-The SC Department of Natural Resources